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ABSTRACT

A television series focusing on the development of an interpersonal relationship between parents and their young children was designed during 1975-1976. The design was preceded by a thorough national search for existing materials on parenthood, a literature review, a needs assessment study, and the goal formulation. A one-hour experimental television special and its condensed version were then developed. One hundred and thirty-five parents selected from a target audience viewed them and provided feedback for program improvement. A prototype program was developed but not broadcast by the end of the project. (SC)

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ED132974

Television for Effective Parenthood

FINAL REPORT

Division of Early Childhood
Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc.
Charleston, West Virginia 25325

August 31, 1976

IR004273

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Foreword

The Television for Effective Parenthood (TEP) staff, on the program officer's and contracts officer's advice, agreed to and negotiated an extension of contract (at no additional cost to the government) beyond the original contract completion date. This allowed more time, in view of complications in the forms clearance process, to complete the broadcast evaluation portions of the study. Thus, this initial contract work on the overall TEP effort occurred from July 1, 1975 - August 31, 1976.

The Appalachia Educational Laboratory (AEL) served as the primary contractor for TEP. Acknowledgement is also due to three subcontractors which had vital project roles. Metropolitan Pittsburgh Public Broadcasting (WQED-TV) served as the television production facility. High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, Ypsilanti, Michigan, assisted the TEP staff with curriculum development activities. Statistical Research Incorporated, Westfield, New Jersey, was on standby for 14 months to carry out sample selection and telephone interviews following broadcast.

Many persons have contributed to the TEP effort as staff members, through their organizations or as individuals. In keeping with the overall approach of this report, they are not mentioned by name here, but their contributions are hereby most gratefully acknowledged.

TELEVISION FOR EFFECTIVE PARENTHOOD

FINAL REPORT

E. E. Gotts

Introduction

This final report first provides an "Overview of Work Plan" for the project. This is followed by a presentation of the "Progress and Products" of the effort. In line with the approach of the Land[1] analysis of C.T.W. activities, a "Discussion" is offered next of process factors which may have affected the project. Finally, "Conclusions" are considered regarding the overall effort.

Overview of Work Plan

The Appalachia Educational Laboratory (AEL) began in July, 1975, to perform background work for the design and development of a new television series that would "instruct parents and prospective parents of infants and young children in effective child rearing and nurturing practices." This project is called Television for Effective Parenthood (TEP). The TEP effort was sponsored by a contract from the U. S. Office of Education (USOE). The contract was let following a national competition in response to a Request for Proposal (RFP) issued in Spring, 1975. The TEP project was designed to establish a sound empirical foundation and goals for all subsequent activities as well as to determine whether such a television series should be developed. The 1975-76 work was to occur in three phases.

Phase I

These areas were to be investigated in Phase I: a) the needs of parents of infants and young children, relative to effective parenting practices;

b) the current state of practice in education for effective parenthood, and the existence, quality, and potential instructional value of available instructional materials on parenting; c) the preliminary goals which might reasonably be set for such a series based upon the foregoing sources of data; and d) a preliminary series design which might effectively communicate parenting content that would accomplish these goals.

Early in Phase I AEL organized and convened a national Curriculum/Goals (C/G) Committee of parents and early childhood professionals to review with the AEL staff the results of the needs assessment and the search for existing materials. The C/G Committee provided citizen input and guidance to the TEP staff throughout the work of the three phases. Their contributions included establishing general goals and expected outcomes for the series. These were transmitted to the USOE program officer, who also participated in the C/G Committee's deliberations.

Phase II

In Phase II the TEP staff was to produce a one-hour experimental television special based upon conclusions from the Phase I activities, insofar as these were available by the scheduled production dates. This plan required reaching tentative conclusions in each investigative area of Phase I by early September, 1975. The plan then allowed the staff to bring to a full completion work on each aspect of the Phase I work at a less hurried pace.

The purpose of the experimental special was twofold: a) to provide a show containing many production values capable of attracting parents of diversely varied backgrounds and b) to determine the preferences of parents for the viewing of parent education materials presented in varied ways, e.g., documentary, drama, panel discussion, and standup comedy, among other approaches. The one-hour experimental show was to be broadcast, if possible, to a national

audience including a representative sample of parents from the target group. These parents' reactions to various television presentation types were to be determined primarily by structured telephone interviews carried out by a nationally respected interviewing organization which commonly conducts interviews for the A. C. Nielsen Company's broadcast ratings. These interviews were, however, to be conducted in greater depth than is typical of Nielsen activities. Printed materials were prepared to support the TV show and research.

Phase III

In Phase III, two pilot or prototype programs were to be produced of broadcast quality. The techniques of presenting parenting information in the pilots were to be determined from a consideration of results of Phase II. The pilots were then to be shown to small representative samples of target audience parents to determine their impact or effectiveness in assisting parents to be more effective with their young children. After these activities were completed, the staff was a) to prepare treatments for the individual programs of the planned series and b) to create a prospectus which might be used in presenting the series' conception, design, development, and potential. The prospectus was to be used to attract potential sources of support for the series in view of the fact that USOE had committed itself by Spring, 1975 (when the original RFP was issued for this work), only to completing the background research and development activities called for by this initial year's contract. The notion was that the contractor could then seek support from other sources than USOE for work subsequent to the initial year.

In addition to the work outlined above for Phases I through III, the TEP staff was to engage in continuous dissemination in order to create a state of readiness and receptivity nationwide for the advent of this series, if its potential success and value were confirmed by the research and development activities. Supplying printed materials for the shows was part of this work.

Contractor - USOE Collaboration

In accomplishing all of the foregoing work, the TEP staff was to work closely with USOE in recognition of the policy commitment which was being made by the Commissioner of Education to initiate this new effort in education for prospective parents and parents of infants and young children. This close working relationship between the TEP staff and USOE was essential to the project's success because many kinds of internal clearances and coordinations had to be effected to accomplish within one year what would otherwise have required perhaps two years in a more typically paced research and development cycle. The issue being addressed by the collaborative effort was not simply one of accelerated pacing, however, but one of potential impediments to successful progress which might arise in the relationships between the contractor and various federal offices and processes (e.g., USOE functionaries, OMB, OPA).

Further, USOE's support of the TEP activities implied a new policy position: that parent education should be offered to adults (i.e., to persons beyond typical public school age) in order to benefit infants, preschool children, and even the unborn (i.e., to benefit children not yet of typical school age). This further implied that the Office of Education was an appropriate agency to initiate such an effort. In the case of such an innovative venture with its attendant policy ramifications, it appeared to be prudent for USOE to maintain a close working relationship with the contractor.

Progress and Products

Phase I

Needs Assessment. A needs assessment instrument was designed based upon a commonly recognized conception of needs assessment plus examination of an

existing literature on the needs of parents of young children. By August, 1975, a questionnaire was designed and prepared for submission, through USOE, to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance procedure. Various minor modifications were made in the instrument and procedures in the course of this review, and a final instrument was issued as OE Form 438 in English and Spanish in October, 1975. As the needs assessment report shows, arrangements for the needs assessment sample and distribution and return of the questionnaire required the balance of the winter and spring of 1975-76. However, approximately a 10 percent sample return was available to the C/G Committee by their second meeting in December, 1975. This allowed for some very tentative consideration of parent needs. By their third meeting in February, 1976, results of the needs assessment, based on almost 50 percent of the final sample, were considered by the C/G Committee. The availability of preliminary results at these early points in the process provided an important empirical assist to them in their formulation of goals for the series. Final analyses of the needs assessment results were completed in late spring and early summer of 1976. Assessed needs of parents from the total sample were similar enough to those from the approximately 50 percent preliminary sample of February, 1976, that they supported the same essential goals recommendations made by the C/G Committee. It has been possible, furthermore, to use the more refined results from the total sample to make fine adjustments in subsequent planning for the series, based on them.

The TEP staff prepared a final version of the needs assessment report (See Parenthood Education Needs: A National Assessment Study, July 1, 1976.), which documents the methodology, results, and conclusions of this investigation. This report can serve as a resource for further work on this series and may have several other uses as well. The TEP staff further plans to develop a new needs assessment instrument, based on the one used in this study, to serve for

local needs assessments by groups involved in parent education. This instrument should prove to be a beneficial spin off from the TEP effort.

Existing Materials. A literature search and assessment of existing materials in parent education was completed rapidly following the project's initiation. In fact, a preliminary report was given to the C/G Committee at its first meeting in early September, 1975. A final version of this report was completed soon after this (See An Evaluation of Visual and Printed Materials for Effective Parenting, November, 1975.), and appears as Appendix A to the report, Literature Search and Existing Materials Assessment (July 1, 1976). As that report indicates, the search procedures were highly successful. Project staff located the great majority of parent materials which had been created up through summer, 1975. Excellent cooperation from the national Parenting Materials Information Center of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, Austin, Texas, contributed materially to the success of this search. Further excellent cooperation was received from other regional and university related media depositories. A special feature of the assessment was that a representative sample of better quality film and television materials was submitted to the Association for Instructional Television (AIT), Bloomington, Indiana, for independent evaluation, using the same essential rating categories used by AEL in its evaluation of a much larger body of material. Results from the AIT and AEL evaluations showed substantial agreement. This reliability check on AEL's procedures presumably assures the reader of the corresponding report that AEL's technical evaluations of existing materials lead to conclusions similar to those of a widely recognized media evaluation agency. While the above report was prepared specifically to meet TEP goals, its potential value for other parent education efforts is pointed out in the report. (See Appendix A, p. iii of the Literature Search report.)

Preliminary Series' Goals. The national Curriculum/Goals Committee participated in the early weeks of the project in the selection of potential topics for a one-hour television experimental special, based on a preliminary survey of possible goals. In September, 1975, they discussed an approach to determining goals for the series, based upon the anticipated forthcoming results of the national needs assessment. They also discussed a general philosophy of goals at that time and produced a list of their expectations for such a series. The results of these early deliberations were organized by AEL staff, following the meeting, and distributed back to individual members of the C/G Committee for their review and comment. At their second meeting in early December, 1975, they again discussed goals in the light of the preliminary results of the needs assessment. These goals statements were again distributed back as minutes of the meeting to C/G Committee members. By the time of their third meeting in February, 1976, this process of goals formulation needed further sharpening and was a major item of business. By this time, 50 percent of the sample returns were available as discussed above. The Committee seriously engaged itself in this third meeting in generating series goals. In view of the needs assessment results they also suggested topical treatments through which these goals might be achieved. Shortly after this third meeting, one member of the C/G Committee assisted the TEP staff in integrating results of the three prior discussions of goals into a list of goals and expected outcomes for the series. A document was prepared based upon this collaborative activity (Appendix A of this report).

The document was then distributed to members of the C/G Committee who reacted to this integrated conception of series goals and outcomes. The final results of this process appear below.

Preliminary Curriculum/Goals Statement. The TEP project's purpose shall be to create a television series (with supporting materials and activities) to

reach a national audience of prospective parents and parents of young children such as to educate them in effective parenting practices for enhancing their young children's cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development.

Specifically, the overall goal of the series shall be "developing positive interpersonal relations between parents and their young children," as a strategy for accomplishing the above purpose. The C/G Committee expects the following outcomes to result from pursuing this general strategy in conjunction with appropriate content emphases:

- Parents will learn better how to treat their child as a growing person (in terms of: accepting the child's feelings, talking with the child about problems and questions, helping the child to cope with difficulties such as fighting, the child getting along with others, obeying rules, understanding the child's behavior through observation, and showing love and care for the child).
- Parents will learn more about themselves (in terms of: personal feelings and habits as they affect the child, personal needs for their child to obey, how to handle personal reactions to their child's disobedience, and knowing and feeling confident that they are doing what is best for their child).
- Parents will learn more about child growth and development (in terms of: understanding the child's perception of the environment and helping him learn about it, what learnings to expect of their child at a given developmental level, the individuality of their child, how the child's personality develops, ways and places to get information about child development, the contributions of play to development, and how the child's language develops from infancy onward).

- Parents will learn more about teaching and bringing up their child (in terms of: materials, ways and what to teach, developing the child's self-control through loving, correction, and reward, the child's sense of right and wrong, their child learning to make choices and plans, being clean and mannerly, redirecting the child, bedtime routines, and guiding child television viewing).
- Parents will learn more about responsibly providing a suitable home environment (in terms of: not neglecting or abusing children, understanding how the family lifestyle affects their child, efficient use of personal time through planning, and arranging for child care).
- Parents will learn more about keeping the family safe and well (in terms of: preventing childhood accidents and giving first aid, recognizing developmental problems and getting help for their child's special needs, telling if the child's rate of growth is normal, providing adequate nutrition, recognizing childhood illnesses and getting needed help, obtaining adequate shelter and furnishings, understanding how "illness" is sometimes used to gain attention).

Preliminary Series Design. Finally, Phase I involved the preliminary design of the proposed television series. Within Section IX of the needs assessment questionnaire, TEP staff included questions specifically designed to sample the target audience's preferences for particular media and for television program elements. These questions were based upon a review of literature of differential audience preferences as a function of audience social characteristics plus prior AEL experience in preparing broadcast and printed materials for parents of young children. Respondents' answers to

these questions were used by TEP staff and the C/G Committee in their discussions of the television series' design. In anticipation of other Phase II activities, further experience was accumulated by showing a 60-minute experimental special to approximately 150 parents from the target audience. Together, findings from this portion of the needs assessment and from preliminary evaluations of the experimental special were used in the preliminary series' design. The series' design was then concretely embodied in a set of guidelines for TEP scriptwriters. These guidelines were circulated among members of the C/G Committee, USOE staff, and outside consultants whose input has led, through progressive revisions, to the present version of the guidelines which appear as Appendix B in this report.

Phase II

Experimental Special. The TEP staff planned and prepared a draft script for the one-hour experimental television special called for in the contract, prior to the first C/G Committee meeting (September 4-6, 1975). The C/G Committee had, even before this time, participated by mail and telephone in the selection of topics from which the draft script was developed. The final script was then prepared and reviewed by both USOE and the Office of Public Affairs (OPA). Thereafter the TEP staff produced the show at WQED-TV, Pittsburgh in October, 1975, and completed its editing at Screen Gems, New York City on October 24, 1975. The completed show was titled "It's Never Too Late." Support materials were printed to complement the TV program.

Broadcast. As outlined in the original TEP plan, preliminary contacts had already been made with the following television networks to inform them of the forthcoming experimental special and to solicit their interest in broadcasting it: ABC-TV, CBS-TV, NBC-TV, PBS, and Westinghouse Broadcasting. These contacts were followed up by providing more detailed information on the

special as the work on it progressed. This television network dissemination work needed to be conducted concurrently with television planning and production because of the scheduling lead time required to assure a possible network viewing date during the contract year.

Evaluation Form. Similarly, relevant portions of a telephone survey interview form for the special were developed as early as possible after each applicable television planning decision. Thus, by late September, a fourth draft of the instrument had passed outside reviews and was transmitted to Statistical Research Incorporated (SRI), Westfield, New Jersey, for final touches to fit their mode of operation. SRI was to carry out sample selection and telephone interviews under subcontract to the TEP contractor, AEL. A standard forms clearance packet was transmitted to USOE for the telephone survey on October 11, 1976.

The forms clearance process continued for several months within USOE and thus was never presented to OMB for a clearance decision. USOE's internal process took exception to aspects of the survey which were already a matter of contract agreement at the time of the original award; they wished to change these provisions before approving the study. Another primary issue (and source of delay) raised by the USOE Forms Clearance Officer was that the AEL and SRI proposed viewer contact technique of random-digit dialing and other procedures might be in violation of provisions of the "privacy act." After considerable delay, he sought an opinion, through the USOE program office, from the Office of General Council (OGC). OGC eventually (April 7, 1976) issued an opinion which in effect said that in no conceivable way did the AEL proposed methods impinge on provisions of the "privacy act." By this time congressional action on the "Federal Reporting Act" led the USOE Forms Clearance Officer to judge that the forms could not be forwarded to OMB pending clarification. The forms continued in this unresolved state from then until the very end of the contract.

In view of the foregoing problems in receiving clearance to evaluate the experimental special (i.e., problems in performing the ultimate activity of Phase II), the TEP staff undertook as a stopgap measure to gather limited data, at the expense of AEL, whenever dissemination activities for the special were in process. In this manner data were gathered from about 150 parents. Later, at the request of the Commissioner of Education, a write up of these findings was prepared and shared with USOE (Appendix C).

Re-edit of Special. As soon as the experimental special was prepared, it was shown to small groups of parents and professionals in early childhood by the TEP staff and to USOE staff by the program officer. Viewer reactions were obtained to determine the special's readiness to serve its experimental function. A number of common themes emerged from these viewings, leading USOE and the TEP staff to agree to proceed to plan a final edit. These plans were virtually complete by late November, 1975. Thus, when the C/G Committee met in early December, they were asked to view the first edited version and afterwards to react to the planned final edits. Their conclusions at that meeting were that the planned edits would indeed make the program virtually ready for its experimental purpose. One additional important editing decision emerged from the meeting regarding a particular segment of the special as well.

All of the planned edits appeared to be feasible. However, the cost of the changes plus an additional edit of this one-hour show were substantial and made it virtually certain that a decision to complete this edit would also require the preparation of one less half-hour pilot show. This exchange was considered acceptable to USOE, TEP staff, and the C/G Committee. Therefore, agreements were made to formalize in January a modified scope of work in line with this.

In addition to improving the quality of the experimental show, this experience pointed up the need to provide a formative evaluation stage prior to final edit in future work. The TEP staff, based on this conception, proposed that in producing the pilot and any future shows, a rough edit would first be performed at low cost. Then the program would be shown to small audiences plus members of the C/G Committee. Findings from this step would be used to plan a final broadcast-quality edit. The program officer concurred that this would be a sensible approach to use in making future editing decisions.

The agreement to re-edit the special and drop one pilot was formalized at a joint TEP-USOE meeting in January. By February 3, 1976, the re-edit of the special was complete. From this point, TEP staff continued broadcast contacts and awaited a) forms clearance and b) a clearance from the Commissioner of Education to release the show. The TEP staff was verbally informed that the Commissioner of Education "did not like" the experimental show and would not authorize its broadcast. But this assertion was not followed up in writing. Thereafter nothing moved on these matters for over 90 days, until TEP staff succeeded in arranging a meeting with the Commissioner of Education to discuss policy questions. The Commissioner was now informed that Westinghouse Broadcasting understood the purpose of the experimental special and had requested permission to broadcast it during summer season, 1976.

At this meeting the Commissioner indicated that it was not his wish to suggest any specific direction to be taken in the television series. Instead, he wanted this to come from the TEP contractor. The Commissioner promised at that meeting to work with the TEP staff toward determining whether the experimental special could be broadcast, and requested findings from the parent groups to which it had been shown already. He stated that he had not viewed either of the edited versions of the special himself and consequently

had not, contrary to reports, decided whether it should be broadcast. He invited the TEP staff to send him its recommendations for how the review process might be conducted and to suggest an appropriate panel to review the question. The C/G Committee was suggested as the already-operational body which had accepted responsibility for such an assignment. These events are further analyzed in the "Discussion" section below.

Phase III

Series Design. Based on the information available from Phases I and II, the C/G Committee and TEP staff met for a third time, February 26-28, 1976, and planned the series design. Earlier reference has been made to the product resulting from these discussions (Appendix B). Topics from which the individual shows might be developed were also outcomes of this meeting. These topics appear within an instrument circulated to the C/G Committee following this meeting (see in Appendix A).

Pilot Program. At the third meeting of the C/G Committee, the subject of the one-half hour prototype or pilot show was selected from among the entire list of possible series shows. The Committee further recommended the program elements which should be included within the show. It was to be a segmented show, integrated by a host, dealing with a content area that emerged at the top of the list from the parenting needs assessment (i.e., helping parents to understand their children's feelings and, in turn, to be able to teach their children about feelings). Support materials were planned.

A show was planned and scripted, containing the above features. The script was first reacted to by the C/G Committee and then sent to the USOE program office. A go ahead was received to produce the show. The TEP staff, nevertheless, had wished to meet with the Commissioner of Education prior to going this far with plans for the pilot, in view of the prior inexplicable reactions from his office to the experimental special. But despite repeated

attempts to arrange such a meeting, it could not be arranged until late May when the pilot was well under way.

Final production activities were performed on the pilot in early June and a first rough edit completed on June 10. This was reviewed by members of the C/G Committee, among others, the following week and many changes were planned. The number of changes was great enough to suggest that a second rough edit should be performed. This was accomplished by June 24, in time for a final review by the full C/G Committee July 8-10. The decision to do a second rough edit proved correct, because a number of additional constructive suggestions came out of this meeting for the final edit of a broadcast-quality version. In general, however, the C/G Committee's reactions to this rough edit were positive and they believed it would after final edits be an acceptable pilot that reflected their intentions. The show is titled "Mixed Emotions."

Reactions to the second rough edit were also received and considered from the USOE program officer. The problems which he identified in the pilot were similar to those which concerned both the TEP staff and the C/G Committee.

Final edit of the pilot was completed August 19, 1976 in New York City. This was a successful edit that took into account the many helpful suggestions which had been compiled during the preceding formative evaluation activities.

The experience with the pilot, of performing formative evaluation of rough edited cassette, demonstrated the values to the project of going through this stage. These values are: a) considerable savings are realized over the cost of performing two or more edits on two inch equipment and b) the final show, edited by successive approximations, more adequately reflects the intent of the many individuals and groups that have shared in its development.

This multi-stage edit process, none the less, has its limitations. It takes more time, because time must be allowed following each edit to show it to both parents and program advisors. A second drawback is that it requires

patience, imagination, and good will or trust on the part of all parties. They must in effect enter into a mutual agreement to view each successive edit as a trial or experiment, the intent of which is to reach optimum production/editing compromises regarding "what is there." But at the stage of preparing the initial pilot for a series, such an approach is surely prudent, even if some parties lose sight of the experimental nature of the process or try to reach a premature point of closure.

Pilot Evaluation. On June 15, the screening interview and telephone survey forms to accompany the pilot were submitted to USOE for OMB clearance. At the time of the contract's completion, these forms were in the same status as those originally submitted to accompany the experimental special: still in the forms clearance process. Now, however, the process was greatly complicated by the realities of a recently-imposed system of reduced quotas for all federally sponsored forms, and the process of initial forms review had been transferred out of USOE to the office of DHEW Undersecretary for Education. Thus, as the contract approached its conclusion, there appeared to be almost no hope that forms clearance would ever occur. Thus, although the Commissioner of Education determined and stated in a letter (June 25, 1976) to the TEP staff that the special could be broadcast, contingent upon receiving forms clearance, these new developments made this contract broadcast activity appear improbable.

Treatments and Prospectus. The TEP staff had contracted to prepare treatments for each of the planned shows of the series plus a prospectus by September 30, 1976. These portions of the work were, however, deleted by USOE in July following the resignation of the program officer.

Evaluation Offer. By this time, arrangements had also been made for broadcast of the pilot in five geographically diverse communities from Los Angeles to Pittsburgh. All that was lacking was forms clearance.

Therefore, when the magnitude of the forms clearance problem began to surface in July, 1976, the TEP staff offered USOE to perform by either of two methods an evaluation of the special's broadcast by Westinghouse at the expense of AEL. TEP staff offered to prepare a position paper on how the evaluation could be conducted to obtain valid reactions to the broadcast. This would have obviated the forms clearance problem. USOE appeared for a time to be considering this possibility, but by the time of a joint meeting on July 30, USOE informed the TEP staff that they were not prepared to discuss the possibility of an evaluation at AEL's expense. A possible reason for this reluctance is that USOE program staff did not wish to appear to cooperate in an action that bypassed forms clearance, even if this action were the only way to assure the project's successful completion. Perhaps other explanations are possible.

Whatever explanations apply, these facts remain: a) all planning, production, formative evaluation, and final editing were complete; b) evaluation forms were ready and had been submitted to forms clearance; and c) broadcast arrangements were made for both the experimental special and the pilot before the end of the contract period. A national readiness exists for the series (Appendix D).

Discussion

The writer now takes occasion to reflect upon various latent issues that have at times emerged and at other times remained concealed. As Professor K. Mielke[2] has observed, in his now widely circulated study of the federal role in television, a benign and beneficial position for government to take is to propose and to allow the contractor to dispose, according to the terms of the contract. Mielke documents this as a key ingredient in those television efforts which have been successful under federal support.

Many themes and events might profitably be abstracted for examination from the Progress and Products section of this report. The one theme which most readily yields to analysis, however, after the manner of Mielke's conclusion, is reactions to the experimental special. Additional facts will be cited here to permit a more detailed examination. Hopefully, the conclusions to be drawn from this solitary theme may shed light upon some of the more puzzling outcomes of this experimental effort.

When the experimental television special was being discussed at the first meeting of the C/G Committee in September, 1975, it was apparent that there were two different conceptions of it within USOE. The program officer's conception was that it was an "experimental special." Another representative of USOE appeared to favor the interpretation that it should be a "prototype" show. The TEP staff's conception, based on their proposal, matched more nearly that of the program officer.

Such differences of conception, nevertheless, are neither matters of indifference nor neutrality. They cannot be passed off as issues to be settled by facts. Thus, when these different conceptions of what the special "should be" became evident at this early date, TEP staff sought to clarify where a common ground might be found on which all forces could work together in the interest of the project's success. Personal contacts were made by two key TEP staff members with the USOE official who had expressed the view that the special should be a prototype show. He responded to both contacts in the same way: he assured the TEP staff of his good will and promised that all of the direction that they would require would come to them through the USOE program officer. At the time these reassurances were accepted at face value, although the TEP staff expressed the hope that all interested parties within USOE would form themselves into an internal steering committee (an idea

of the program officer) which could relate to the TEP staff with one mind and voice.

This internal mechanism was never formed at USOE. This was somewhat surprising because the possibility had been discussed favorably with TEP staff by the Commissioner of Education in July, 1975, at the very outset of the work.

After the experimental special was, following formative evaluation, final edited in February, 1976, a cassette copy was sent to USOE for internal viewing. Now the original difference in conception began to surface in these forms: the program officer considered the experimental special to be acceptable and judged that it should be broadcast, whereas the TEP staff was told that the Commissioner did not like the show and would not approve its broadcast.

The mystery of how the same stimulus (i.e., the special) could elicit such differing reactions was puzzling, until the possibility was considered that the differing conceptions of the show caused it not to be the same stimulus at all. The fact was that, even though the contract called for an experimental show, not everyone thought this was a wise direction to go. But no clearing-house mechanism had been created within USOE (not even an ad hoc mechanism) to resolve such issues. The TEP contractor was hence in the middle, and it was not clear the middle-of-what.

The puzzle might have been unravelled had more information become available, but despite considerable effort on his part, the program officer could not find out from the Commissioner's office anything specific that was a basis for the objections. And, again, nothing was provided to the program officer or the contractor in writing to confirm the verbally reported decision that the "special" could not be broadcast.

Eventually, the TEP staff's curiosity was piqued by this challenge. Meetings were sought with the Commissioner through every conceivable channel, beginning with the most regular and acceptable approaches within the bureaucratic chain of command. In each instance, these efforts were unsuccessful. Finally efforts were made outside the regular channels to set a meeting for discussion of these important policy matters, and prior to the performance of additional work, lest it too prove to be acceptable but disapproved. Then, suddenly and unexpectedly, the Commissioner's office acknowledged two prior "regular" approaches which heretofore had gone unanswered. In this way, the Commissioner's response was credited to an earlier approach through regular channels.

Soon thereafter the meeting occurred. These facts emerged: the Commissioner had never seen the experimental special and he had made no decisions about it. Apparently, prior reports to the contrary, from his office to the program office, were not authorized by him. This suggested that someone else in his office had not liked the show and had directed that it not be broadcast. Interestingly, during this meeting a member of the Commissioner's staff, while discussing the special, reported that he had always thought doing an experimental special first was an incorrect approach--that instead pilots should have come first followed by a special. Even more interesting is the fact that this member of the Commissioner's staff was the same person who had attended the first C/G Committee meeting. And who had reassured the TEP staff that all that they needed to receive would come to them through the program officer.

The foregoing facts have now hopefully prepared the way for reflection, upon the TEP project's successes and frustrations, a la Mielke.[3] Further, these reflections may suggest some courses of action which might profitably

be explored to increase the chances that innovative or experimental efforts, which are federally funded, will have some chance of succeeding.

It is important, in reflecting, to note first that the preceding account attempts to assign no blame or credit and it views none of the principal parties as all good and bad. Each participant is in fact regarded as sincere, dedicated, and desirous of producing beneficial results. The problem results rather from conflicting conceptions of how desirable ends are achievable and, perhaps, what their appearance will be once they are actualized.

Professor Mielke's[4] conclusion if applied to contracts (contra grants) leads one at first blush to wonder how things might be different if the federal role were limited to financial support, with nothing judged before its time. This halcyon image of contractor autonomy cannot long linger, nevertheless, before one recalls harsher realities of endless interactions through the forms clearance tunnel. And what of script clearance? But once these regulatory mechanisms are in place, a contractor might wish rather than total autonomy to receive the active support of persons within the funding agency in the interest of shortening delays and otherwise clearing a favorable outcome. Yet such active support seems necessarily conditional upon involvement and at least concurrence with the contractor's moves.

If something is to be learned from all this, it may be that another kind of resolution is needed. As a first approximation of this, suppose, drawing from the extended example presented above of the TEP project's experience, that an internal steering mechanism (if the goal is direction) or clearinghouse function (if the goal is coordination) had been created. What would the possible effects of this have been? Well, it appears that the existence of such a mechanism or function might have averted the cross purposes which all too covertly intruded upon the determined forward movement of the

contractor, and which all too late surfaced. Had the differing conceptions within USOE, of the special, been out in the open, the parties might have agreed to bury their differences or compromise or submit to arbitration. The contractor meanwhile could have eased temporarily into other required activities or could have been an active participant in the compromise.

In any event, whether the process is brought into the open or required to occur behind the scenes, the interested parties within the federal agency should get themselves together and relate to the contractor in a unified way. There should further be remedies within the federal agency (e.g., forced arbitration) for those times when cooperation breaks down as a means of achieving unity. It likewise appears that even high placed persons may take a direct interest in events occurring at the more remote reaches of an agency. If so, they should as readily be included in the steering or clearing process as would an interested colleague in the program office.

Several other themes or events could be lifted from the TEP experience for scrutiny or reflection, based on the detailed process records that have been kept, somewhat after the manner of Herman Land.[5] Each might potentially reveal an underlying order which upon analysis would suggest other potential solutions to problems either within the federal contracting process or the TEP contractor's own operation. But time and space prohibit these further ventures, while a sense of perspective suggests that the theme already probed remains central to a proper understanding of the TEP project performance, July 1, 1975 - August 31, 1976.

Conclusions

There is a widely felt need among parents of the target audience for assistance in achieving for themselves effective parenting practices. These

needs can be articulated into several specific areas, as discussed in the needs assessment report. Parents differentiated among these areas those which were of higher and lower priority. Some parenting needs, which had been mentioned in the literature and sampled by the AEL questionnaire, were of such low priority as to be of potentially small interest to a mass audience, while other parenting needs appear to be widely shared. This kind of differential information has been useful to the TEP staff in planning what should receive emphasis in such a series.

The literature search showed that, within the context of existing programs, effective parenting practices have been identified. Furthermore, there has been some success in identifying methods for transmitting these effective practices to parents. Little experience, however, is available from the literature on what will be the best methods for presenting parenting information via television to so diverse a mass audience as prospective parents and parents of infants and young children. Existing programs in parenting have produced both printed and film/television materials for instructional use. A majority of existing materials were, however, produced outside the context of operating programs. Both materials produced by programs and independently of programs have been assessed by the TEP staff. Virtually none of these materials has been evaluated to determine their impact upon parenting practices, and only a small portion of the materials has been formatively evaluated. Because of this, the value of existing materials is, therefore, an unknown. AEL's assessment may be viewed as a technical evaluation; although, surely no substitute for an empirical evaluation of effects. That is, the AEL assessment of the materials corresponded to one type of formative evaluation; it should not be confused with an impact assessment. It was, nevertheless, possible to order these materials on the basis of their assessed quality. When ordered in this way, it becomes apparent that, although

many materials exist, few are of a design and quality to be appealing to a mass audience. Many materials, despite this limitation, appear to have potential value when used within the context of existing programs that relate to the individual parent. The materials assessment seeks to make such recommendations regarding the usability of these existing materials.

The overall goal of the TEP effort should be to promote effective interpersonal relationships between parents and their young children. This broad goal should provide a focus within which the other broad goals and expected outcomes are viewed. Topics for individual programs optimally will span several expected outcomes and may also cut across more than one goal. This fact poses a considerable challenge for the evaluation of outcomes of the TEP effort.

The television series should be designed such that each show will include a variety of approaches to television content presentation. That is, no single mode of presentation appears to be of broad enough appeal to attract, hold, and instruct the target audience. But it does appear to be feasible, by including in each broadcast program a variety of approaches, to reach and instruct some substantial cross section of the target audience. The extent to which this is possible, given particular program mixes, is a matter for further study based upon broadcast release of the TEP prepared television materials.

The TEP experience with formative evaluation of rough cassette edits has been instructive. These offer distinct cost advantages over two-inch edits, if their experimental purpose can be kept in central focus by all parties involved in the replanning process.

Finally, it may be concluded that serious experimentation in television development demands much of both the contractor and the supporting agency.

A climate of experimentation can be fostered only if trials and tentative results are accepted as legitimate outcomes. If, within the contractual relationship, there are conflicting conceptions or expectations (i.e., especially ones emphasizing what "should be") the fragile ecology of the experimental climate may be unable to survive.

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2. Mielke, K. W., Johnson, R. C., & Cole, B. G. The Federal Role in Funding Children's Television Programming. Executive Summary. Bloomington, Indiana: Institute for Communication Research, Indiana University, April 30, 1975.

3. Mielke et al., prior citation.

4. Mielke et al., prior citation.

5. Land, prior citation.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES FOR TEP SERIES

The overall goal for this series shall be to improve interpersonal relationships between parents and their young children.*

*This overall goal and the goals and outcomes appearing after this have been adopted by the Curriculum/Goals Committee to the TEP Project.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Television for Effective Parenthood Program

I. To learn more about TREATING MY CHILD LIKE A PERSON.....This outcome is acceptable___
This outcome is not acceptable___; it should read:

_____

Descriptive Items

1. Help my child see and accept his or her own feelings.
2. Talk with my child about his problems and answer his questions.
3. Help my child to behave when he starts to fight.
4. Help my child learn to get along with family and friends.
5. Help my child see why rules are good.
6. Tell what children are doing by watching them.
7. Show love and care to my child.

Topics	Assigned
New Baby in Family (1)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Siblings--Relationships (1) (4)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Crisis Situation (1)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Discipline (3)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Adoption (4)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Changing Relationships (4)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Setting Limits (5)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Social Pressures (others do it) (5)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Trust (7)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___

Other topics:_____

_____

_____

_____

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Television for Effective Parenthood Program

II. To learn more about MYSELF AS A PARENT.....This outcome is acceptable___
This outcome is not acceptable___, it should read:
_____

Descriptive Items

1. My own feelings and habits and how these help or hurt my child care (how they affect my child care).
2. My need to make my child mind me (how my own needs can affect how my child feels about himself, and my child's learning).
3. Why my child will not mind me and how this bothers me (how to get over being upset).
4. How to be sure that I am doing what is best for my child (or my worries about what other people think).

Topics	Assigned		
New Baby (adjustment of parents) (1)	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Consistency and Flexibility (1)	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Roles Parents Play (1)	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Priorities of Parents (1)	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Community Relations (1)	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Attitudes Toward Institutions (1)	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Discipline (2) (3)	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Parents' Rights (4)	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Counseling (4)	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Single Parent or Remarried (4)	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Superstitions and Astrology (1)	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___

Other topics: _____

_____

_____

_____

III. To learn more about HOW CHILDREN GROW AND DEVELOP.....This outcome is acceptable___
This outcome is not acceptable___; it should read:
_____

Descriptive Items

1. How the world looks and sounds to my child, and how to help him learn about it.
2. What my child should be able to learn at his age, so as not to "push" my child too much.
3. How children grow into special, one-of-a-kind people.
4. How my child's personality is formed.
5. Where you can find out about how children develop.
6. How my child learns to use his body by playing (runs, jumps).
7. How babies learn to talk (what the baby hears; what it learns from what I do and say).

Topics	Assigned		
Problem Solving (1).....	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Fantasy Changes (1).....	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Developmental Stages (2) (5) (6).....	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Language Development (2) (7).....	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Ethnic Differences (3).....	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Differences in People (3).....	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___
Passiveness and Agressiveness (4).....	correctly___,	incorrectly___,	should be under___

Other topics: _____

_____

_____

_____

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Television for Effective Parenthood Program

IV. To learn more about TEACHING AND TRAINING MY CHILD.....This outcome is acceptable___
This outcome is not acceptable___; it should read:
_____

Descriptive Items

1. What ways of teaching will work best with my child (the way I teach; use of books, TV).
2. How to control my child by using reward, praise and correction in a loving way (how to help my child control himself).
3. How to teach my child to tell right from wrong (to be moral).
4. How to help my child think for himself (choose what he wants to do; make plans).
5. How to teach my child to be neat and clean and to show good manners.
6. How to get my child to change from doing one thing to doing something else.
7. How to get my child to go to bed on time (and to rest or take naps).
8. How to plan my child's use of TV (picking TV programs, not watching too much TV).

Topics	Assigned
Develop Self-Control (2)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Priorities of Children (2)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Teaching Responsibility (2)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Ethics, Moral Values, Religion (3)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Problem Solving (4)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Choices (children) (4)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Common Ventures of Life, How to Handle Them (4)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Activities--Proper Use of Leisure Time (6)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Getting Children Interested in Aesthetics (6)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Rest (7)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Lengths of Time for Watching TV, Sound of Radio, Record Player (8)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___

Other topics:_____

_____

_____

_____

V. To learn more about TAKING CARE OF THINGS AT HOME

This outcome is acceptable___
This outcome is not acceptable___; it should read:

_____

Descriptive Items

1. Finding help for people who don't take care of their children, or who hurt their children.
2. How my child deals with the way that my family lives (people in the home, what they do together, how they get along).
3. Making good use of my time (plan my time for child care, house work, school or job, time for myself and my friends).
4. Getting good help with child care (day care, baby sitter, nursery school).

Topics	Assigned
Child Abuse (1)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Mental Abuse (1)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Physical Abuse (1)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Enlarged Family (2)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Single Parent or Remarried (2)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Superstitions and Astrology (2)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Foster Parents, Community Homes, Day Care (4)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Baby Sitting, Home Alone, Other Persons Having Influence on Child (4)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___

Other topics:_____

_____

_____

_____

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Television for Effective Parenthood Program

VI. To learn more about KEEPING MY FAMILY SAFE AND WELL

This outcome is acceptable___
This outcome is not acceptable___; it should read:

_____

Descriptive Items

1. How to keep my child from getting hurt (and how to give first aid).
2. How to know if something is wrong with my child (is not learning; cannot walk well; cannot see or hear well).
3. How to tell if my child is growing right (body size, height, weight).
4. Pick the right foods and take care of them so they will not spoil (fix meals that are good for my family's health).
5. How to know when my child is sick (has a fever or says he hurts some place).
6. Find and take care of a home for my family (how to shop and pay for housing and furniture).

Topics	Assigned
Development of Safety Concepts (1)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Drug Abuse (1)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Signs that Difficulty May Arise (2) (3)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Nutrition (4)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Concern About the Eating Process (4)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___
Illness (5)	correctly___, incorrectly___, should be under___

Other topics:_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B

TELEVISION FOR EFFECTIVE PARENTHOOD

Preliminary Series Design

The preliminary series design was based upon a knowledge of the appeal of television elements to adult viewers, responses of parents to specific questions in the needs assessment, and reactions by parents to selected program elements within a one-hour television experimental special which was shown to small groups. All of these considerations were reviewed by the Curriculum/Goals (C/G) Committee during their third meeting. They then recommended what the series should look like. Their recommendations were provided to an experienced, senior scriptwriter, Michael Sklar, who prepared Guidelines for TEP TV Treatments. These guidelines, which appear below in this section, concretely embody the particulars of the preliminary series design. The guidelines were reviewed and modified, as discussed in the Phase I section of this report.

These guidelines were to be used by educational staff members who had received workshop training in treatment preparation to prepare them to write the television plans (treatments) for individual shows. The series design plan further called for a professional scriptwriter to work on a final script under the coordination of the educational writer who had prepared the treatment, with Sklar supervising the script materials from a television perspective.

Finally, the series design called for a preparation of 40 treatments corresponding to goals, outcomes, and topics identified in the body of this report. The C/G Committee, at its fourth meeting, was to select 30 of the 40 suggested treatments for possible development into complete scripts. From these, 20 to 26 scripts were to be selected for actual production. However, USOE in July, 1976, deleted the treatments from the work to be completed. Work on them was, therefore, discontinued.

(Revised)
6-30-76

Some Guidelines for TEP TV Treatments

by Michael Sklar

The Series

TEP (Television for Effective Parenthood) is a series of half hour television programs designed to help people become better parents of young children.

Most of us eagerly accept the responsibilities of parenthood, but some are unaware of the problems and pitfalls we may face in bringing up children. Sometimes we reflect outworn attitudes or prejudices in our expectations of how very young children should behave and develop. These views may decrease our effectiveness in the parent-child relationship or they may detract from the enjoyments of parenting.

TEP is based on the premise that parenting is a complicated job that can and should be learned.

To become a helpful and effective parent it is essential to understand how children develop. The early childhood years are recognized as crucial to to the child's growth. Each stage of development during this period has its own behaviors and challenges. And behavior changes--sometimes markedly--as the child moves from stage to stage.

TEP will help prepare parents for the changes that take place in their children during early childhood, aiding them to recognize and deal constructively with such behavior.

As children grow and change, parents may also undergo changes as a result--and not always for the better. The strain of parenthood may not only be damaging to the child--it may also disrupt relations between the parents themselves. Many marriages have suffered from conflicts arising from the frictions of child-rearing.

Here again TEP can help. Advance knowledge of such dangers is the best defense against them. Parents who are aware of the changes a child may cause in their lives are better able to adjust to those dangers. Understanding themselves, they are in a better position to understand and help their child.

Each program of the TEP series deals with one aspect or more of child-rearing. The emphasis will be on interpersonal relationships. We will be exploring the causes and effects of emotions and emotional conflicts that extend up through the age levels, from the child to the parents, and even to the grandparents. The issues presented will range from the simple and fundamental to the complex.

While paying due attention to problems and the sources of problems and misunderstandings, we will also help parents to build positive and rewarding interpersonal relationships. That is, both positive and negative aspects of the parent-child relationship will be examined.

In handling these matters, the TEP programs will stress immediacy in the presentation of the subjects. Producers and writers will get close to the subject, rather than standing off from it and "viewing objectively." Emotional conflicts will be shown on the screen rather than talked about. Positive "modelling" behaviors will be shown for parents to emulate.

The Format

The TEP format is flexible and includes a variety of production techniques:

Dramatizations.

Documentaries.

Puppets.

Presiding over every program is a Host personality. The Host ties together the various program segments: drama, documentary, puppets. The Host

introduces people and subjects, relates people and subjects to each other, provides a bridge between program segments, comments on the action, and, when it is called for, sums things up and points to solutions.

Although the Host appears in every program, he/she does not necessarily appear at the beginning of each program. Programs may start with any one of the three production elements listed above. The Host may then follow the opening segment, perhaps commenting on the subject and linking it to the segment that follows.

Thus for example, a program might start with a dramatization. We then meet the Host, who comments on the skit and introduces a filmed documentary on the same subject. This could be followed by puppet sequence which further develops the theme of the program. Finally, we meet the Host again for a few words of summation and goodbye.

Another time perhaps, the Host may appear at the very opening of the show, establishing the theme of the program and introducing the first segment.

But although the format is flexible, there are certain qualifications:

Although dramatic skits are not a "must" for every program, most programs will contain one or more dramatizations.

Comedy may appear in the dramatic skits as it may naturally emerge from real domestic situations. But it is not a regularly contrived feature, and there will be no standup comic routines.

Documentaries and/or puppet sequences will usually, but not necessarily, appear in each program. In short, the use of one and/or another of the production techniques in any given program should be decided by the needs of the subject of that program.

Specially written and performed music, instrumental or lyrical, may be employed from time to time but should not be emphasized at the expense of the content of the program.

Similarly, acting or singing stars may appear as special guests, but the manner in which they are presented should not overshadow the content of the program.

The Host

The Host performs an important function in the TEP series. As stated above, he/she establishes the theme and indicates the thrust of each program. Introducing subjects and guests, the Host sets the stage for program segments, linking segment to segment. He/she comments aptly on the action, points to solutions when they are available, and provides a wrapup for each program.

For documentaries the Host provides the voice-over narration. In these offscreen roles, unlike the conventional narrator, he/she is not cool, distant, objective. Instead, he/she reacts personally to the film. Warmly involved, the Host may recall similar incidents in his/her own life, or in the lives of people he/she knows. The Host may be intercut with the film in order to make such comments. Again, he/she may be intercut with dramatic skits and puppet sequences to comment on the action, or perhaps to suggest alternative courses of action. The Host may appear also between segments to tie together similar or diverse situations, and comment on them.

In manner the Host is informal but informative; authoritative without appearing to be didactic. Realistic in outlook, his/her factual approach to the problems portrayed is optimistic. Relating to parents as a friend and guide, the Host thus elicits a strongly positive reaction from parents in the television audience.

The Documentaries

Documentaries will include a wide variety of themes, events and situations involving parent-child relations. They will be filmed on location by pro-

fessional film crews. Appropriate library film will also be used when available.

Unlike the dramatic skits, which employ professional actors, and, which although based on fact are frankly fictitious, the TEP documentaries are totally actual.

It is estimated that documentary material may take as much as 10 minutes of a half hour program in which it appears. In some instances, although rarely, the documentary film may be the entire program.

Appearing at the opening of the program, the documentary may establish the theme of the program. Or it may be placed in the body of the program with material that supplements a theme that has already been established. It may also be used to show other aspects of the same subject.

The Dramatic Skits

Most programs will contain one or more dramatic skits. Like the documentaries, the skits may sometimes--though rarely--make up the entire half hour program. The skits employ professional actors to dramatize the various problems parents encounter during the early childhood of their children. These situations are portrayed with accuracy and realism. The dramatic characters are shown as real people involved in down-to-earth situations. The tensions, while often explosive, are the ordinary tensions of everyday life.

Problems are presented not as the experts would hopefully like them to work out, but as problems end in life: some in success, some in failure.

Some dramatizations may show how a problem was solved. Such built-in "modelling of behavior" for the TV audience is legitimate if handled carefully. Just as often, however, the skits will be open-ended. Instead of supplying an answer, these skits would end on a note of question. In such cases the Host

might follow the skit, comment on the drama, and offer possible solutions, or challenge parents to think through and try personally meaningful solutions.

In the presentation of parent-child conflicts, or in conflicts between parents, some people in the television audience may see themselves mirrored unfavorably on the screen. Not only could this mobilize resistance or defensiveness to the message of the program, it could also cause parental guilt. Both reactions are counter-productive and should be avoided.

Resistance and guilt will be avoided by honest, sympathetic and skillful writing. The dramatizations must show an acceptance of people, not as we would like them to be, but as they are, with faults as well as virtues and weaknesses as well as strenths. Implicit in scripts and production should be the message that TEP is not judgmental, that TEP has only one goal: to help people solve their problems as parents.

To dramatize these problems, the skits revolve around the experiences of a young Americal couple in the raising of their children.

Bill and Elsie Parker (merely tentative working names) are an attractive pair, both in their early thirties. Although race and ethnicity are not important in the context of the TEP series, and no point should be made of either in the scripting, the Parkers are native-born Whites whose parents came to the United States from middle and western Europe. Their children are Woody, a boy of seven; Donna, a four-year-old girl; and Allen, a baby five months old. Another important member of the family is Grandpa, Elsie's father. Equally important is Grandma, Bill's mother. These members of the cast make up the basic acting company and will appear regularly in the dramatic skits.

The Parkers live in a medium-size industrial city in the middle west. Their home is in a part of the city which saw its best days before the second world war and is now becoming a mixed neighborhood. Their neighbors, conse-

quently, include not only Whites but also Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and even a few Mexican Americans, Native Americans and Oriental Americans. These people might appear from time to time in the skits, when visiting socially with the Parkers, or because of involvement with them in neighborhood affairs. Their children play with the Parker children and no special point is made of it.

The Parkers live in a district between the mostly Black inner city and the mostly White suburbs. Their house, of pre-world war two vintage, bears no resemblance to the slick suburban split levels built today. With lots of rooms and a patch of struggling grass in front, it is old fashioned and slightly shabby. The houses around it are of the same style and vintage. Grandpa Smith bought the house back in 1930's when the neighborhood was new and all White. Bill and Elsie moved in when Elsie's mother passed away. Now Bill would like Grandpa to sell the house and move with them to the suburbs, but Grandpa is passionately attached to his home and will not hear of it. Nevertheless, when Grandpa passes on that will probably happen.

Each member of the Parker Family is vividly characterized. To the extent this is possible, it is true also of the children. Each has his or her own way of doing things. Each becomes so recognizable that the television audience is able to anticipate and predict their reactions to the various situations that are dramatized. Thus the Parkers, adults and children, make an interesting and attractive group of people that the television audience will look forward to meeting and following from week to week.

The Cast

Bill Parker is honest and intelligent. After two years of college he dropped out to marry Elsie and became a construction worker. Now, ten years later, he is a highly paid carpenter and is gradually moving into business for himself as a building contractor by freelancing after hours. He is upwardly

mobile, on his way out of the working class but not yet fully a member of the middle class. He takes his values and attitudes from both. This often produces confusions and conflicts, especially around questions which involve the raising of his children. In such matters he is apt to take the conservative approach.

Elsie Parker, like her husband, is bright, and eager to get ahead in the world. After high school she worked as a stenographer until she and Bill were married and the first of the children came along. Elsie's values, on the whole, tend toward what is called middle class. As a parent, her attitudes are liberal. Out of this difference between herself and Bill, where child-raising matters are concerned, (i.e., out of the differences associated with her liberalism and Bill's conservatism) come many of the conflicts that are developed in the dramatic skits.....and some comedy, too.

Conflict and comedy are potential in the characters of the grandparents as well.

Grandpa Smith, Elsie's father, is a widower in his late fifties. A school teacher until he retired on disability, he is an exponent of the permissive approach to child rearing. He points with pride to Elsie as a successful product of that philosophy.

Grandma Parker, Bill's mother, does not agree. She is a widow in her mid-sixties. Living near Bill and Elsie, she is a frequent visitor in their home. A peppery little lady, she believes in bringing up children with discipline and recommends that approach to Bill and Elsie. In fact, however, she dotes on the Parker children, lavishes love and gifts on them, and is easily manipulated by them.

Allen is a lovable child and at five months he is at a stage of his life that is wonderful for him but difficult for those around him. He is beginning

to crawl, and investigates his surroundings. This and other newly learned behaviors often get him into trouble and dangers--and get his parents and grandparents into conflict as to what should be done about him.

Donna too is a sweet and lovable child. But at the age of four and a half she is entering a new stage of her development. She is being more and more curious and competitive. Adult and sibling reactions to her behavior provide much good material for the dramatic skits.

Woody, at seven, is a happy child, full of energy and curiosity about his world. But his boundless energy and endless curiosity can be wearing on adults, even on loving parents and doting grandparents. Woody's seventh year brings new outside friends and school experiences. Like each year before, this year presents new developmental behavior. Here again are found some of the questions that will be dramatized in the TEP series.

Puppets

The puppet segments will be brief, possibly no more than three minutes long. By its nature, however, puppetry is able to convey simple information with great speed and effectiveness.

The puppet segments also offer a highly flexible tool for reaching parents with information that might otherwise be unpalatable and difficult to accept.

Puppetry might also be used in situations for which it would be difficult to cast live actors--certain kinds of infant and early childhood behavior for example.

Like the dramatic skits, the puppet segments might revolve around the child rearing experiences of a puppet family. This family could be an exaggerated version of the Parker family itself. In any case, the puppet

characters of this family are stereotypes, easily recognizable in the same way that animated cartoon people are humanized.

While the dramatic skits are usually "straight," the puppet segments will often treat the same material in terms of comedy and satire.

The puppet segments may also be employed to show stereotyped behavior on the part of children and/or adults, while the dramatic skits portray behavior that is more realistic and consequently more complex.

Another use for puppets is as a counterpoint to dramatic skits or documentaries. If the skit or documentary, for example, shows people locked into a situation they are unable to solve, the puppet segment might follow with a sequence which shows the solution. Conversely, the skit or documentary might show the correct solution of a problem, while the puppetry shows what should not be done. In either case the puppet segments are played off against the other segments.

PRELIMINARY EVALUATION REPORT ON "IT'S NEVER TOO LATE"

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this report is to summarize briefly preliminary results of evaluation on a one-hour, and on a 33-minute abbreviated version of an experimental television "Special" called, "It's Never Too Late." Evaluation results will also be reported for printed support materials which were designed to complement and be used with each version of the program. (See attached materials.)

Both versions of the experimental program consist of several different production formats or segments integrated by means of a host who introduces each part and provides continuity throughout the program. The one-hour show was designed for broadcast use in the home to gather information from parent viewers primarily on the differential appeal of production strategies, but also on the integrity of the program for its entertainment value and educational potential. The different segments of the program illustrate these types of television presentations: drama, song, comedy, documentary, and panel discussion. The 33-minute show provides an edited video presentation of the opening through the documentary segment of the one-hour program, and was intended for use by schools, day care centers, clinics, and such. Support materials entitled, "What Kind of Discipline is Right" provide a narrative discussion of the main topics covered by each program, with reference sources and discussion questions for post-viewing reinforcement. The one-hour and one-half hour version of the "Special," and their support materials were evaluated to provide information that would contribute to planning and development of future individual programs in a television series on parenting.

Evaluation Procedures

The television programs were shown on videotape equipment primarily in schools and other early childhood settings to small groups of parents who were willing and could arrange to leave their homes during the daytime or evening hours to assist in our evaluation work by reacting to the program. The total sample of 135 parents were primarily mothers of young children, and are heterogenous with respect to racial-ethnic characteristics, socio-economic backgrounds, and educational levels. The typical parent appears to be a white mother, aged 21 to 30, who has a high school education and 2 to 3 children. A small number of fathers, parents of older children (i.e. older than 5 years old), and prospective parents were also included in the sample. Prior to showing the program, the sample received printed materials by means of children carrying them home from school or by our program staff distributing them at the viewing settings.

Evaluation data were gathered by means of a combination of: observations of audience viewing behavior (i.e. eye contact with the TV monitor), a brief questionnaire administered immediately following the program, and in certain groups, a post-viewing group interview. All groups responded to the questionnaire, but not all groups were observed or were involved in the follow-up discussion.

The fact that the one-hour program was evaluated outside the natural home environment must be viewed as a significant drawback, and a potential problem for generalizing the results of this evaluation to home-viewing audiences. The less intimate, comfortable, and familiar settings in which the evaluation was carried out, coupled with the request that parents view the program at locations some distance away from their homes, raise questions about potential bias in the results. Under these conditions the influence of self-selection on sample bias was possibly very strong; this is evidenced in the fact that less than 2 percent of those receiving materials actually viewed the program at the designated locations.

Results

What were the reactions of the parent sample to the "Special" relative to its entertainment value and educational potential? The results will be reported separately for both versions of the "Special." Questions which were used to measure the appeal of the two shows were "How much did you enjoy the program overall?" and "Overall, how would you rate this program in terms of how much you enjoyed it?" The questions assessing educational value were "How much did you feel you learned from the program about parenting?" and "How would you rate this program in terms of its educational value for parents?" The following average ratings were obtained:

TABLE 1: General Ratings for Two Versions of the "Special"

Program	Entertainment Value	Educational Value
60 min.	3.6	3.0
33 min.	3.7	3.5

Ratings: (4.00=Great Deal, 3.00=Some, 2.00=Only A Little, 1.00=Not At All)

Further, the individual segments of the program were rated, and these results are reported in Table 2:

TABLE 2: Ratings of Individual Program Segments

Program/Segment	Entertainment Value	Educational Value
60 minute:		
Host	3.6	3.1
Drama	3.7	3.5
Song	3.4	2.9
Street Scene	3.4	3.1
Comedy	3.7	3.0
Documentary	3.5	3.1
Panel	3.4	3.2
Special Material	1.9	1.3
33 minute:		
Host	3.7	Open-ended comments only; refer to explanation in text.
Drama	3.6	
Song	3.5	
Comedy	3.6	

The following sample of open-ended remarks provides an indication of what parents learned from the short program and possibly what might have been learned from the same segments of the one-hour show: "Reinforcement of my personal methods of discipline." "Patience, reason with the child in a way he understands." "That I need to concentrate on why I discipline my child and make sure it wasn't in the mood I'm in at the time." "The important thing is love." "I saw myself in parts of the film. It shows that other parents have things in common."

A sample of "critical comments" based on responses to open-ended items on the questionnaire and interview are provided in Table 3; these comments which were made by a majority of the audience sample (estimated at 75%) further enrich our understanding of parent reactions to the different segments:

TABLE 3: Critical Comments on Individual Segments

Host:	"Very informative," "Pleasant," "He pulled it together," "Expressed sincerity and optimism."
Drama:	"Good lesson here," "True to life," "Typical," "Related to everyday tensions."
Song:	"Beautiful," "Good lyrics," "Much meaning," "Shows love of family," "No real meaning," "Poor match to message."
Street Scene:	"Shows how easily children can be influenced by adult behavior," "Filmed the way children are today."
Comedy:	"Related well to real life," "Funny," "Look at yourself and laugh," "The truth in a humorous way," "Shallow and non-pertinent to most situations."
Documentary:	"Interesting," "Fun," "Educational," "Good--seeing in action is better than hearing description," "Not enough detail," "Good, but a bit heavy."
Panel:	"Racial problem stood out," "Draggy."
Special Material:	"Highlighted need for understanding," "Funny," "Confusing," "Boring."

Relatively more negative comments were made regarding the "Special Material" and "Documentary" segments; relatively few negative and mostly positive comments were made about the "Host," "Drama" and "Comedy" segments; reactions to the "Song" were mixed between positive and negative; and only a relatively small number of comments, primarily non-judgmental in nature, were made about the "Street Scene" and "Panel" segments.

The results of observing audience reactions to the one-hour program revealed significant variability among segments, but generally confirmed the results of opinion data just reported. Audience attention was highest for the "Drama," "Song" and "Comedy" segments (i.e. 90% or more of the audience were observed watching the TV monitor) and lowest for the "Special Material" segment (i.e. less than 85% of the audience were observed watching the TV monitor). The attention results for the remaining segments, with the exception of the "Host" which is not considered a distinct presentation format, fell between the 85%-90% level.

With respect to the print materials, post-viewing discussion brought out the general fact that they were a source of stimulation and learning and motivated many people to come and view the program. Sample critical comments made about the print materials were: "Explained in more detail what was going to occur," "Gave insight to what the program was trying to accomplish," "Good follow-up and interesting literature," "Much too general," "Didn't really have time to read."

Summary and Conclusions

The evaluation AEL undertook intended to provide information on the entertainment value and educational suitability of two versions of an experimental television "Special" and supporting materials on parenting. The major goal of the evaluation was to influence the planning and development of high impact television programs and printed materials for parents of young children and prospective parents in the nation. All preliminary evaluation results are based on a minimal sample of primarily parents of young children. The evaluation was carried out in school and other early childhood settings using videotape equipment. Observational, questionnaire, and group interview methods were used to gather data. Results provide support for drawing some conclusions about the overall program's entertainment and potential educational value.

This experimental program was both interest holding and of potential educational value to parents of the target audience. AEL's intent to produce a highly entertaining program with stimulating educational materials was realized. Not all segments of the program were equally appealing or worthwhile, but one poorly rated segment did not appear to affect adversely the positive perception of the overall program. Though segments were quite clearly and consistently differientiated by the audience on their appeal and educational importance, most segments generally seemed to relate a realistic and meaningful series of program experiences for parents in an enjoyable way.

APPENDIX D

DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

In Addition to the dissemination activities related to the broadcast of the special test show and the pilot, a state of readiness for parenting materials exists through the following activities:

PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS AND GROUPS

The following organizations were contacted to inform them of the TEP program and to request time for a presentation during their annual meetings:

American Association of Elementary Kindergarten Nursery Educators
American Association of School Administrators
American Educational Research Association
American Guidance Services, Inc.
American Home Economics Association
American Parents Committee, Inc.
American Psychological Association
Association of Childhood Education International
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Child Study Association of America
Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc.
National Alliance Concerned with School Aged Parents
National Association for Education of Young Children
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of State Boards of Education
National Education Association
National Parent Federation for Day Care and Child Development, Inc.
National School Boards Association
National School Public Relations Association
West Virginia Education Association

Presentations were made and TEP posters displayed at the Head Start Workshop in Houston, Texas; the National Alliance Concerned with School Age Parents in Denver, Colorado; the National Association for the Education of Young Children in Dallas, Texas; the National Association of Educational Broadcasters, Washington, D. C.; CEDaR, Washington, D.C.; Southeastern Council on Family Relations, Hilton Head, South Carolina; Association for Childhood Education International, Salt Lake City, Utah; the National Council of Organizations for Children and Youth, Washington, D.C.; the Education for Parenthood Conference, Washington, D.C.; the Council for Exceptional Children, Chicago, Illinois; the Parenting Institute, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; the Regional Head Start conference in Atlanta, Georgia; and the Cooperative

Statewide Meeting for ESAA and Parent Education Project School Systems, Burns, Tennessee. The names and addresses of persons who participated in these meetings and requested additional information pertaining to the TEP program can be found in a list available with this report.

SCHOOLS

Each Chief State School Officer was contacted by telephone or by letter informing him/her of the TEP program and the availability of the special test show and the pilot for local viewing and dubbing. These were to provide continued use by groups and parent organizations within the state. Support materials were also included. The special test show was sent to the Florida State Department of Education, the Virginia State Department of Education, the Illinois Office of Education, the Maryland State Department of Education, the West Virginia State Department of Education, the N.Y. State Department of Education and the Tennessee State Department of Education.

The special test show was also shown over cable TV in the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania area. Although the specific purpose for the broadcast was the evaluation of the show, the viewing audience was much broader than we anticipated.

Five sites and five alternative sites were selected for the evaluation of the pilot. Letters were sent and acceptances received from Los Angeles, California; Austin, Texas; Birmingham, Alabama; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Rapid City, South Dakota. The acceptances were based upon their approval of the pilot. Parent groups were identified and contacted in each of the five sites selected for showing of the pilot. These groups included formal programs operated by Head Start, civic organizations, individuals, schools, parent-teacher organizations, and various special interest groups.

It should be noted that three schools in each of ten states selected to participate in the needs assessment were contacted and agreed to cooperate in providing data vital to the development of the series. The ten states which were contacted are: Region I, New Hampshire; Region II, New Jersey; Region III, Maryland; Region IV, Alabama; Region V, Wisconsin; Region VI, Texas; Region VII, Iowa; Region VIII, Wyoming; Region IX, California; Region X, Washington.

COLLEGES

The special test show was shown at West Virginia State College to a class in Family Living and to a TV class at the University of South Florida. Both groups of students evaluated the show. A dub of the show was made by West Virginia Wesleyan College for a parenting project being conducted by Drs. McArdle and Miller, project co-directors.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

The special test show was shown to community groups in Charleston, West Virginia for purposes of evaluation.

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